



The REDTAIL REVIEW

The Official Newsletter of the 187th Fighter Wing

2017, Vol. 2, Issue No. 1



Two U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons, 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., taxi to the runway February 27, 2017, for the first takeoff of Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Red Flag 17-2 is a realistic combat training exercise involving the air forces of the United States and its allies. The exercise is conducted on 2.9 million acres on the Nevada Test and Training Range.

COMBAT TRAINING

Red tails represent 187th Fighter Wing at Red Flag 17-2

Story and photos by Airman 1st Class Hayden Johnson





Above, U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons with the 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., sit on the flight line March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Twelve F-16's from the 187th FW took part in the three-week exercise. Below, Staff Sgt. Joshua Perez, aircraft armaments system specialist, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base Ala., marshals a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon March 9, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

The 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., participated in Red Flag 17-2 which ended March 10, 2017, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

Red Flag is a realistic combat training exercise involving the air, space and cyber forces of the U.S. and its allies and is conducted on 2.9 million acres, ground and air, on the Nevada Test and Training Range.

“We are able to integrate and see the capabilities of different assets that are available to us, some of which we may be fighting with on future deployments,” said U.S. Air Force Capt. Tyler “Kenny” Hill, the project officer for Red Flag 17-2, 100th Fighter Squadron, Montgomery Regional ANGB, Ala. “I’d say this is the only place you can actually plan for and execute a 100 airplane vul[nerability].”

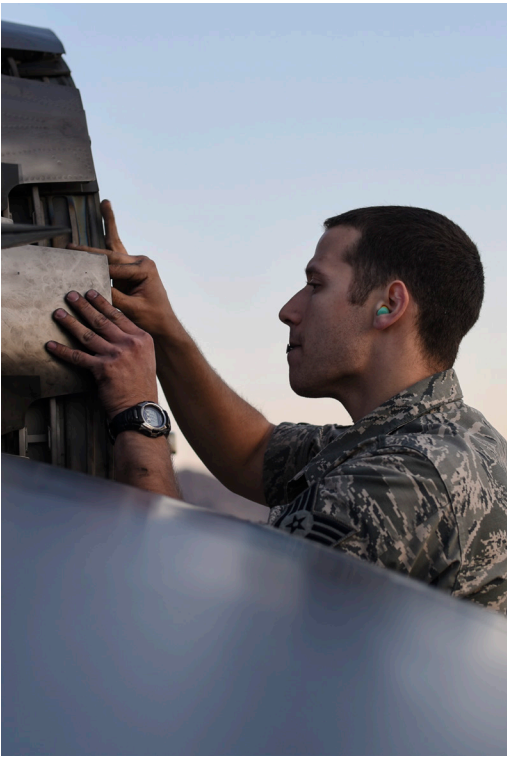
Red Flag dates back to the Vietnam War where, at the time, the U.S. lost many lives and aircraft because many pilots had not seen combat, Hill said. Red Flag was then created for the purpose of simulating the first ten combat missions to young pilots, and continues today to integrate with other forces and maintain mission readiness.

Aircraft and personnel deploy to Nellis AFB, Nev. for Red Flag under the Air Expeditionary Force concept and make up the exercises “Blue” forces.

“A RED FLAG MISSION ALLOWS US TO OPERATE AT A DEPLOYED TEMPO BASE.”



Left, Staff Sgt. Patrick McNabb, aircraft armaments system specialist, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., inspects a missile wing March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Center, Staff Sgt. William Vigil, an aerospace propulsion mechanic with the 187th Maintenance Squadron, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., replaces a divergent seal on the engine exhaust nozzle of a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon February 28, 2017, on the flight line during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Right, Airman 1st Class Patrick Holmes, a crew chief, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., performs routine maintenance on a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Below, Senior Airman Joshua Davis, a crew chief, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., marshals a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon March 6, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.



“THERE’S REALLY NO OTHER PLACE YOU’RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO TRAIN LIKE THIS THEN RED FLAG.”

By working together, these Blue forces are able to utilize the diverse capabilities of their aircraft to execute specific missions, such as air interdiction, combat search and rescue, close air support, dynamic targeting and defensive counter air. These forces use various tactics to attack NTTR targets, such as mock airfields, vehicle convoys, tanks, parked aircraft, bunkered defensive positions and missile sites.

These targets are defended by a variety of simulated “Red” force ground and air threats to give participant aircrews the most realistic combat training possible.

“On the day vul[nerability] and night vul[nerability], there’s approximately 100 jets all flying in about a 160-mile airspace,” Hill said. “It’s a place where we can integrate the forces, U.S. and international, all in one exercise.”

With aircrew’s being able to work with one another, other units, such as maintenance and operations, can become familiar with working away from their individual home units.

“A Red Flag mission allows us to operate at a deployed tempo base,” said Tech. Sgt. Steven Kendrick, an aircrew flight equipment technician with the 187th Operations Support Squadron. “You’re away from your natural habitat, and you’re operating in close quarters, not an open floor plan. The tempo is a lot different. It’s more of a mission expected tempo versus at home being just a standard sortie.”

For many Airmen, this was the first time participating in a realistic training exercise such as Red Flag.

“Red Flag has shown me how important my job is by keeping the F-16’s mission-ready,” said Airman 1st Class Seth Morgan, a crew chief with the 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. “Red Flag prepares the entire unit for deployments, and it’s excellent training for maintenance personnel. One of the many benefits Red Flag has to offer is the opportunity to interact with Total Force Airmen and many different squadrons around the world.”

Red Flag provides an opportunity for the 187th FW aircrew, maintainers, and operations units the ability to enhance their tactical operational skills alongside military aircraft from coalition forces.

“There’s really no other place you’re going to be able to train like this then Red Flag,” Hill said.

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Hunter Stepp, a crew chief, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., sits on an U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon March 1, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

Wing Throwback

July 1991

Members of the 187th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Alabama Air National Guard, Dannelly Field, Montgomery, Ala., push an F-16A Fighting Falcon into revetment in July 1991 while participating in Cope Jade at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea. (Caption info provided by Command Chief Master Sgt. John Harris)



Redtail: The legacy comes full circle

Photo & story by Master Sgt. Benjamin Wilson

SOUTHWEST ASIA -- Airmen assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing take great pride in the heritage created for them by the Tuskegee Airmen.

Today a key piece of the wing's history has once again returned to its flightline.

The legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen was born in Montgomery, Alabama, when the Tuskegee Institute's application to conduct civilian pilot training was approved by the Civil Aeronautics Administration in autumn of 1939.

About one year later President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration announced the Army Air Corps would begin training black military pilots, and the place to do it was Tuskegee, Alabama.

So began the storied history of the Tuskegee Airmen. Flying their P-51 Mustangs, with tails painted bright red, the Airmen fought valiantly through World War II under the crest of the 332nd Fighter Group.

Now more than 75 years later, a red-tailed fighter jet from Montgomery again flies with the 332nd.

The lineage of the Tuskegee Airmen has been passed to Alabama Air National Guard's 187th Fighter Wing. An F-16 Fighting Falcon from the unit is currently flying with the 134th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, which is one of the squadrons assigned to the 332nd AEW.

"It is well documented that our WWII bomber pilots would look out their windows and gain confidence from Red Tail fighters flying beside them. It has been stated they took comfort in knowing their chances for survival were higher with a Red Tail escort than from any other outfit in 12th and 15th Air Force," said Col. David C. Lyons, 407th Air Expeditionary Group commander. "Now we have one of those Red Tails on our flight line, once again flying with the 332nd and creating the next chapter of Red Tail history."

The mission of the unit is to support Opera-

tion Inherent Resolve in the fight against ISIS by providing air-to-ground combat airpower at the request of the Combined Joint Task Force commander.

The 134th EFS has been heavily involved in the fight, flying more than 500 missions, delivering more than 800 weapons, and making significant contributions to the fight in Mosul, Iraq, and Raqqa, Syria.

"We are talking about liberating cities," Lyons said. "That is something we haven't talked about in this way since World War II."

The Airmen of the 134th EFS flying the missions to liberate cities in Iraq and Syria are deployed from the Vermont Air National Guard.

The red tail was provided to the Vermont ANG along with F-16s from the New Jersey and Wisconsin Air National Guards to ensure the squadron had enough capable aircraft to meet the short-notice deployment to support OIR.

At least one Airman from the Vermont ANG takes a special amount of pride in seeing the red tail on the flightline with his unit.

During a formal dinner hosted by the Vermont ANG, Chief Master Sgt. Brian Senecal, 407th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron, had the opportunity to host Col. Charles McGee. McGee is one of the Tuskegee Airmen and also holds a U.S. Air Force record for flying 409 combat missions in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

"Honestly it was the highlight of my whole military career to spend time with the guy – to meet someone who gave some much," Senecal said. "Most Soldiers and Sailors were welcomed back from World War II with open arms and the Tuskegee Airmen had to come back to a still-segregated America."

Despite the discrimination the Tuskegee Airmen faced at the time, their trailblazing efforts have left a legacy of which all Airmen can be proud.

"It is an honor to continue the tradition started by the original Tuskegee Airmen and to be carrying on their good name 75 years later," Senecal said.



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Congratulations to our..



Golden Egg Winners!

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Quarter in Photos

Captions (Clockwise, from top left) (Photos by Airman 1st Class Hayden Johnson unless noted)

A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon with the 187th Fighter Wing, Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala., goes into full afterburners to test the engine March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

A U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptor from Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., sits on the flightline April 20, 2017, at Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Ala. Due to the close relationship and location of the wing, the F-22's were using our ramp and shelters in preparation of Tyndall's Air Show. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jared Rand)

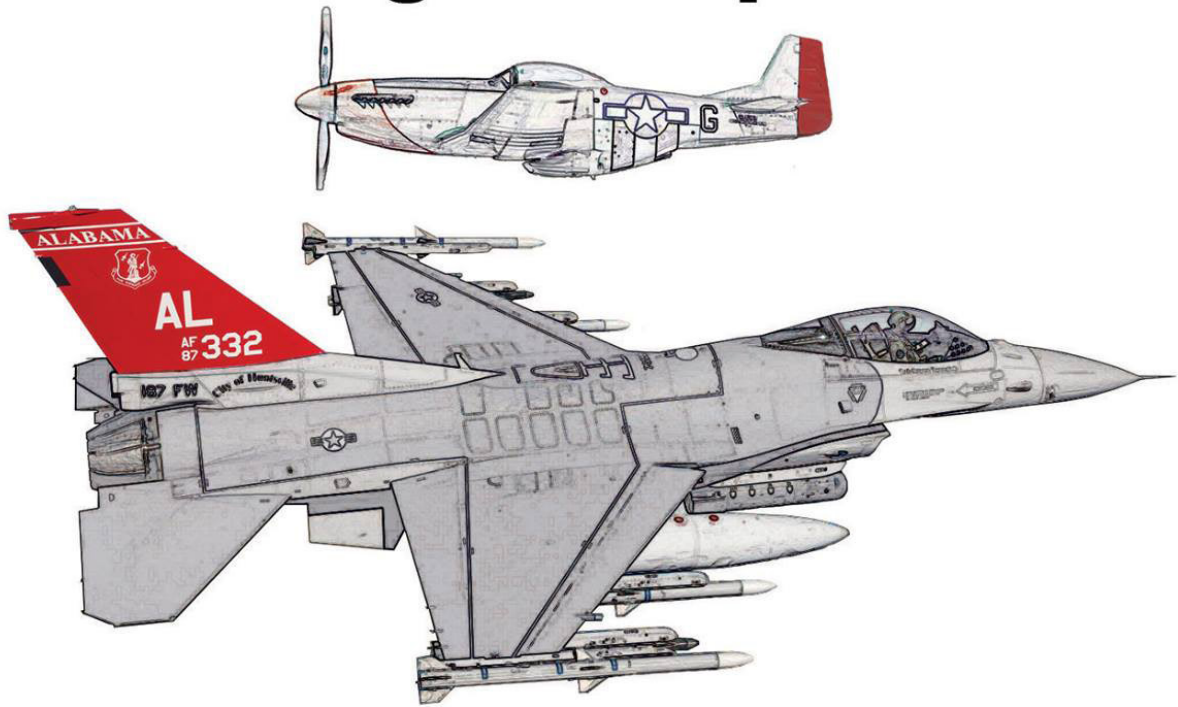
U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. J.P. Northcutt, crew chief, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, marshals in a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Northcutt has been a crew chief with the 187th AMXS for the last 7 years.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Richard "Sheriff" Peace, fighter pilot, 100th Fighter Squadron, performs preflight checks March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

Main photo, U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Patrick Holmes, a crew chief, 187th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, sits on top of a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon March 7, 2017, during Red Flag 17-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.



"75 Years of the 100th Fighter Squadron"



OPEN HOUSE & FLYING DEMOS

June 24, 2017
9:00am - 2:00pm

187th Fighter Wing
Montgomery Regional Air National Guard Base, Montgomery, AL

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